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THE MONTCLARION

#MSUStudentVoice Since 1928

Volume XXX1, Issue 1

Wednesday, September 30, 2020

themontclarion.org

President Cole Shocks the Montclair State Community in Her Recent Fall Address



SPECIAL EDITION
BEST OF THE MONTH:
SEPTMEBER

President Cole will be retiring after 23 years of service.

Photo courtesy of Montclair State University

Bernice Ndegwa
Contributing Writer

Montclair State University's President Susan A. Cole announced her retirement on Wednesday, Sept. 9 in the Fall 2020 Address.

The announcement came after a speech given by Cole thanking her faculty for their contributions made during the unprecedented school year. Cole also ensured her fellow students and staff of the security the university is continuing to implement to keep everyone safe due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cole will be rounding out her 23rd year as Montclair State's first female president, as her term is set to end July 1, 2021. The announcement came as a

shock to many as she stated she had informed the board of trustees of her decision but made sure to explain that she will still continue to fight for the school until the end of her term.

Rich Wolfson, a professor at Montclair State and head of the faculty union, was not surprised by the announcement.

"I was not expecting the announcement at this time, but it wasn't a surprise," Wolfson said. "Dr. Cole has been here since 1998 and this is inevitable for sure."

After Cole's announcement, she went on to explain the reason for which she decided to conclude her more than two-decade presidency.

"No, I am not finished. I could never be finished. So, at some point I just have to stop," Cole said. "The university will never be finished; it is organic, and ever-changing and

meant for the ages, not for the decades."

Cole went on to talk about her time at Montclair State and reflected on how she first found the school and how not only she, but the university and all its students, have grown with her.

"When I came to Montclair State, I found a solid institution with good and talented people and with enormous potential," Cole said. "I had a vision and ridiculous optimism about our ability."

Cole established new schools and colleges throughout her years, including the John J. Cali School of Music, the School of Communication and Media and University College. Along with adding increased academic opportunity, Mont-

clair State increased enrollment from 12,000 students to 21,000 students during her tenure.

Cole's address after her announcement was focused on the safety and the future of the university. Cole thoroughly went through every Montclair State college and pointed out the ways in which they have gone "above and beyond" for its community. To conclude her address, she had members of the university singers perform after she stated that the voices of her students were the thing that motivated her the most.

Melissa Hughes, a sophomore music education major, was one of the students who had the opportunity to perform in the address.

"I know Dr. Cole cared a lot about the music department and

she has a real appreciation for the arts," Hughes said. "I hope whoever our next president is they have the same passions and is committed to making Montclair [State] inclusive to all students and departments."

Bryanna Matos, a senior psychology major, says that she is going to miss Cole.

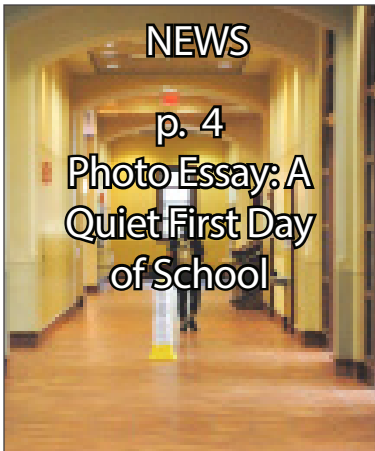
"During her presidency, I have enjoyed her initiative in ending any type of smoking on campus," Matos said. "I feel very sad about President Cole's announcement, I will miss her very much."

After holding her position for two decades, Cole's retirement will surely make an impact on the Montclair State community.

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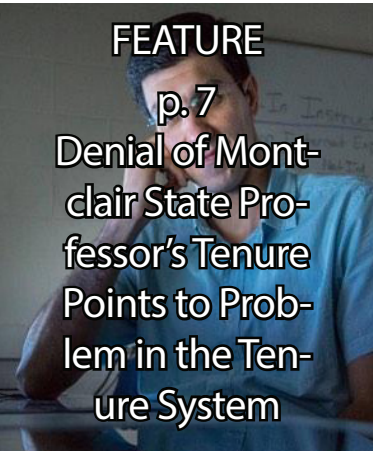
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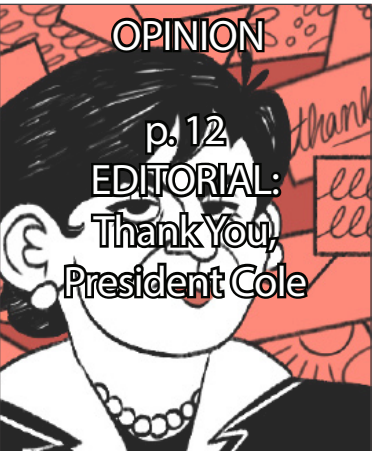
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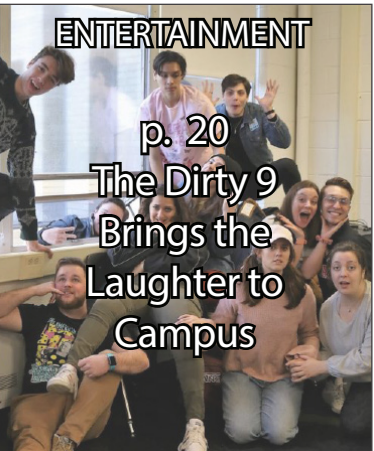
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THE MONTCLARION

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Information reported in the Red Hawk Rap Sheet comes directly from the MSU Police Department. We do not print retractions to the rap sheet unless information directly from the police report is incorrect. We can print an update to the events only if the newspaper is given access to relevant documents to corroborate the information.

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11 Montclair State University Students Suspended For Violating COVID-19 Guidelines



A sign on campus reminds students to wear masks.

Corey Annan | The Montclarion

Jenna Sundel

Assistant News Editor

Montclair State University administration suspended 11 students from on-campus housing on Aug. 23 after they gathered in large groups to party without masks and social distancing.

The students are in violation of Montclair State's COVID-19 rules, which were released before the semester to ensure a safe return to campus.

Other consequences the students face include referral to Director of Student Conduct Jerry Collins and deregistration from any courses or programs with an on-campus component. Organizations that violate the guidelines will be suspended for the rest of the year or permanently.

While the incident is still being investigated, Vice President for Student Development and Campus Life Karen Pennington says there is evidence that campus organizations were involved.

"We have information that indicates one or more organizations held events this past weekend," Pennington said.

Pennington hopes that this incident will encourage students to take greater responsibility for themselves and others.

"We cannot prevent this from happening," Pennington said. "All we can do is continue to educate students about the risks involved and appeal

to their common sense, good judgment and sense of responsibility for themselves and others."

Many students thought that these 11 students were acting irresponsibly and were glad to hear that the university took quick action to help keep the Montclair State community safe.

Bryanna Rosario, a sophomore English major, worries that the actions of some students may ruin the semester for the entire student body.

"Irresponsible actions lead to consequences that they need to face. This is the real world and a pandemic we're living in, this isn't a joke," Rosario said. "Don't go out and risk it and ruin the semester for yourself and others. Start thinking."

Carmen Dibellia, a senior history major, normally lives on campus but decided not to this semester in order to reduce his risk of contracting COVID-19. It angers him to see students disregarding the health and safety of others.

"As a student who isn't even living on campus because I'm afraid of getting sick, I'm actually sick over the fact that these students are on campus partying when [there] are kids that want to be there doing that too, but we can't because of not wanting to get sick or making anyone else sick," Dibellia said.

Any student who sees COVID-19 policy violations can report them using the RAVE Guardian App.

Report Montclair State University COVID-19 policy violations on the RAVE Guardian App

Take A Tour Of Montclair State’s Socially Distanced Campus



Instructional stickers are being placed around campus.

Ben Caplan | *The Montclarion*

Jen Losos
Editor-in-Chief

The fall semester is officially starting up again, and more than half of Montclair State University’s students will not be returning in-person for their first day of class due to the ongoing new coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Many of these students will be attending from their homes virtually, but Montclair State has ensured CDC-recommended guidelines are in place for social-distancing on campus.

With only 38% of classes having an in-person component, Montclair State has placed signage around campus to notify people of the health risks and social distancing procedures everyone must follow if they are on campus. In the classrooms, there are stickers placed on each table and desk directing people where to sit to ensure everyone stays at least six-feet apart.

Plexiglass barriers have been installed in each classroom and lab. In addition to this, Montclair State has also installed over 200 hand sanitizing stations around campus to add to the sanitizing stations already in place.

For students and faculty traveling to campus for their in-person classes, everyone must fill out Hawk Check, a confidential form used for contact-tracing, six-to-12 hours before they step foot on campus. This form includes a health check to ensure that no one coming onto campus, or leaving their dorms, is showing symptoms of COVID-19.

Andrew Mees, the senior me-

dia relations specialist at Montclair State, explained why the Hawk Check form is important for everyone to fill out.

“Our public health experts are actively monitoring the reports that each campus member makes using the Hawk Check self-assessment tool,” Mees said. “People with symptoms or risk factors are instructed to stay home or to self-isolate in their residence hall room and seek care. Our experts also work closely with the local health department to follow up on any cases of COVID-19 and to conduct contact tracing. The university will not allow anyone with COVID-19 to come to campus until they have recovered and a healthcare professional has certified that they are fit to return.”

Residents returned to campus to move-in as early as Aug. 10. During previous semesters, over 6,000 students lived in the residence halls during the semesters in singles, doubles, triples and quads. To ensure social distancing is kept up, only around 3,200 students will be living on-campus in singles and doubles for this upcoming fall semester.

In the residence halls, plexiglass barriers have been placed at each front desk and there is a no-guest policy in place. If a resident needs to quarantine and is living in a double room, the student will be provided a new living space for the duration of their quarantine. Students that must self-quarantine will be provided meals three times a day.

Both Sam’s Place and Freeman Hall are open to students for dine-in and take out through

GrubHub. Plexiglass has been installed to separate diners from the food, and tables have been spaced out and removed for diners’ safety. Other food places that will be open on campus when classes start on Aug. 25 are Dunkin’ Donuts, Blanton C-Store, Jersey Mike’s, Panda Express, Grill Nation, 2Mato, Chop’d, Bistro 62 and SoDeli.

With campus opening to students, Mees has assured the university is prepared in case of a spike in cases.

“If [a spike in COVID-19 cases] should occur, our public health experts will immediately investigate and work closely with the local health department to determine the best course of action based on the specific circumstances,” Mees said. “If the university needs to transition to remote learning, we are prepared to do so.”

If students or faculty see someone not following guide-

lines or not wearing a mask on campus, they can contact the Dean of Students office. Any student not wearing a mask on campus or following guidelines will be referred to the Director of Student Conduct and may face disciplinary action, according to Mees.

If a student forgets to bring a mask, the university is providing them at the University Health Center, the Student Center Information Desk, the Deans’ offices and the Occupational Health Department. Masks will also be available in vending machines around campus and at the bookstore.

Although the university has taken measures for the safety of its students and faculty, some Montclair State students are still wary about the university opening its campus again.

Natalia Krassowska, a junior psychology major, feels unsafe coming back to campus to com-

mute.

“I personally feel unsafe because regardless of the precautions [Montclair State] is taking, the amount of people coming and going on campus makes an outbreak seem inevitable,” Krassowska said.

Katt Hoffmann, a sophomore gender, sexuality and women’s studies major, pulled out of housing in July and does not agree with the university opening campus again.

“Even with classes mostly online and precautions being taken, common areas like the library and food places are going to be breeding grounds for COVID-19,” Hoffmann said. “If there are people on campus there are going to be Greek life activities, friends hanging out together and parties happening off-campus. These precautions are performative and unhelpful unless we shut down the whole campus.”



In Richardson Hall, science labs are set up with plexiglass dividers between lab stations. There are also stickers on the countertops, directing students where it is acceptable to sit.

Ben Caplan | *The Montclarion*

PHOTO ESSAY: A QUIET FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL



The entrance of University Hall, a typically busy location on the first day of classes.

Michael Giannotti | The Montclarion



An outdoor art class taking place next to Dickson Hall on the first day of the fall 2020 semester.

Michael Giannotti | The Montclarion



Students walk by the student center with food in hand.

Corey Annan | The Montclarion

The Montclarion Staff

Corey Annan, Michael Giannotti, Emma Caughlan

Typically, the first day of classes at Montclair State University is filled with thousands of students roaming around campus. Whether it's walking to and from class, hanging in the Student Center Quad or eating in the outside seating area at Au Bon Pain, it's a lively atmosphere for everyone.

Unfortunately, the new coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has changed campus life as we know it. State and university guidelines for COVID-19 have prohibited large gatherings. A once lively campus felt more like a ghost town on the first day of school on Aug. 24.

Now, most students spent their first day of classes at home or in their dorms, while the few students who were able to attend in-person classes didn't spend too much time on campus afterward.

Those who were on campus, however, did enjoy a beautiful day outside, and some chose to take advantage of this. From students studying outside to professors hosting outdoor classes, everyone made sure to socially distance from one another and wear masks.

With New Jersey still in stage two of Gov. Phil Murphy's "The Road Back" plan, it appears that campus life may look this way for quite some time.



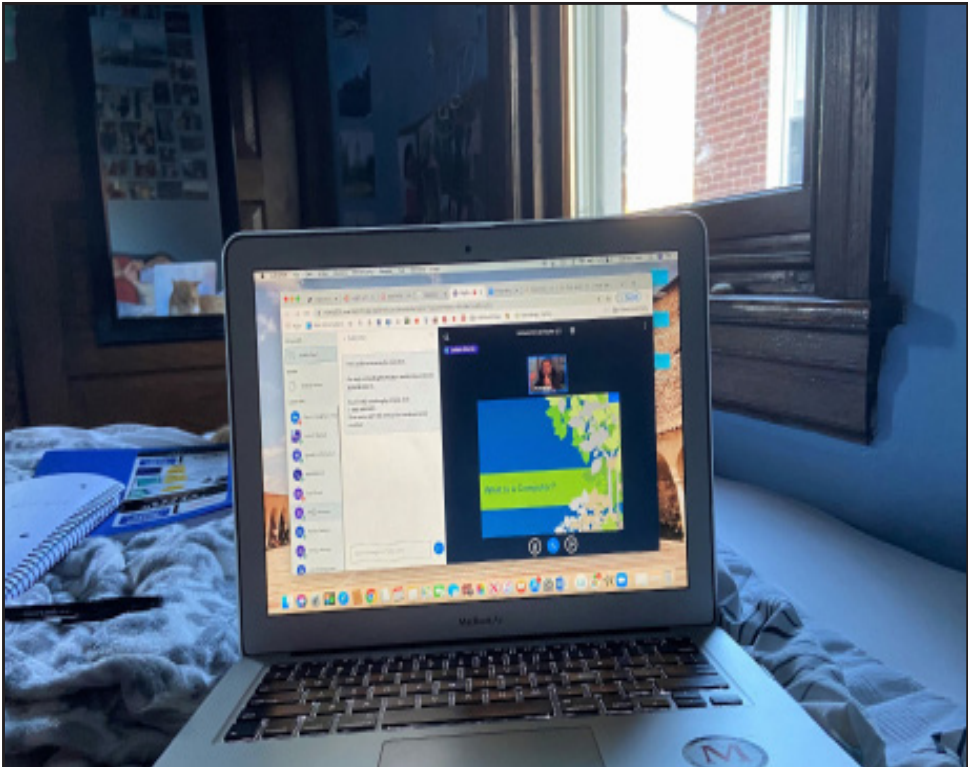
University staff wearing face coverings, following the implemented safety protocols. Michael Giannotti | The Montclarion



In the student center, junior psychology major Genesis Garcia and senior Marcell Jenkins wear face coverings behind the partition at the student life service desk on the first day of classes. Michael Giannotti | The Montclarion



The lobby of the School of Communication and Media is typically buzzing with students, but is now mostly empty. Corey Annan | The Montclarion



For students taking classes online, a comfortable home setup is important. Emma Caughlan | The Montclarion



Emma Caughlan, a sophomore journalism major, begins her first day of classes. Caughlan is planning to complete her fall 2020 semester remotely at her home in Drexel Hill, Pennsylvania. Emma Caughlan | The Montclarion

FEATURE



Dr. Golnabi was respected by students and fellow professors alike before his tenure was denied.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Amir Golnabi

Denial of Montclair State Professor’s Tenure Points to Problem in the Tenure System

Corey Annan

Assistant Sports Assistant

Despite glowing reviews from his peers in the mathematical sciences department and strong support from his students, Dr. Amir Golnabi was denied tenure at Montclair State University after Provost William Gingerich decided that the professor’s research did not adequately meet the university’s standards.

The denial of Golnabi’s tenure was met with outrage from the mathematical sciences community at the university from students to professors. It seemed to them as if their support and admiration for Golnabi and what he did for the university was ignored.

Although the professor received overwhelmingly positive peer and student reviews, along with petitions advocating for the professor to receive tenure, it wasn’t enough to reverse the decision.

Golnabi held a stellar reputation throughout the university for helping students achieve success in mathematics. He even aided students in their own research projects and independent studies while managing his own research projects.

On the Rate My Professor website, a popular service students use to rate professors, Golnabi holds one of the highest ratings in the mathematics department at Montclair State, sitting at a 4.4 out of 5.

Patricia Charneco, a 2018 graduate of Montclair State with a degree in molecular biology, took an independent study with Golnabi in the spring of 2018 and

was eager to expand her knowledge on how mathematics can be useful in the biological and health field.

“A classmate and I approached Golnabi and asked for an opportunity to do research with him,” Charneco said. “We ultimately studied how mathematical models could be used to represent, analyze and make predictions on real-life

situations; cancer growth being one of them. We learned a lot throughout the semester and through his teaching skills my research partner and I gained a better understanding of how mathematical functions can play a big role in the medical field.”

Charneco had struggled with mathematics throughout her years of education. However, her experience with Golnabi as a professor helped grow her confidence in the subject and was a major reason as to why she was able to also pass her calculus course.

“I had failed calculus more than once at my community college and the thought of having to take it again at Montclair State frightened me,” Charneco said. “I put off taking calculus until my senior year at Montclair State. Thankfully, I was lucky to have Golnabi as my professor. His teaching skills helped me overcome that fear of mathematics.”

While the overall perception of Golnabi was overwhelmingly positive among students, he always believed that the school seemed to prioritize research more than anything else. He mentioned that the university set the bar low for teachers in the mathematical sciences department in terms of the quality of their classes,

“I was told that my teaching was too good, you have spent too much time on your teaching. [They also said] if I didn’t spend that much-time on my teaching, your research would be even better.”

-Dr. Amir Golnabi,
Former Montclair State Professor

or how happy the students were in the class.

“As long as you avoided making the students unhappy, you were good,” Golnabi said. “It really didn’t matter about how you taught, even if your classes are super boring or ineffective.”

According to Golnabi, professors in the mathematical department were expected to participate in research projects, with the hopes that the school could potentially be designated as a Research I university at some point.

Montclair State, while considered a public research university, may not exactly hold the prestige and reputation of other research universities in the East Coast such as Rutgers or Princeton since they do not hold the distinction of being a Research I institution.

Golnabi believes that the university could be going through an identity crisis with research being prioritized over education.

“They have been dealing with this for some time now, as they want to be something that they are not. They are great at things that focus more on education and educating future educators, but the current administration wants to change this model. This has created a dilemma in several of their departments,” Golnabi said.

This could explain why in a meeting with the dean this past November, Golnabi was told that his teaching was taking too much of a precedent over his research.

“I was told that my teaching was too good, you have spent too much time on your teaching,” Golnabi said. “[They also said] if I didn’t spend that much time on my teaching, your research would be even better.”

Golnabi has been peer-reviewed by his colleagues on his work prior to his most recent evaluation in February, and has received positive feedback on his research. His research has been published and he had collaborated with Dartmouth College on research projects, where he received his PhD.

Notably, he had also been a part of a study with St. Barnabas Hospital in Livingston, New Jersey.

Hanan Zatliff, a former student of Golnabi and a 2016 graduate of Montclair State, mentioned that the project had the potential to reveal various health factors related to an unborn baby and the mother allowing for a prediction of the baby’s health at birth.

“Math and physics research can sometimes leave the realm of applicability, but Dr. Golnabi’s work was readily useful for society and had strong interest from a well-known hospital,” Zatliff said. “Many research endeavors have no obvious application toward societal progress and I felt Dr. Golnabi’s research was very much a worthwhile and apparently useful endeavor.”

In February, when Golnabi was up for tenure, there was a process that he had to go through that would decide his future as a professor at Montclair State. This peer-review process evaluated his teaching, research and service, among other things.

Golnabi received positive feedback from the Department Personnel Ad-



Dr. Golnabi helped Patricia Charneco and Huma Karim with their independent study in the spring of 2018. Photo courtesy of Patricia Charneco

visory Committee (DPAC), which is made up of six tenured members of the mathematical sciences department. He also received praise from the Department of Mathematical Sciences chairperson.

The DPAC praised him for being a passionate and dedicated teacher, someone who empowered his students to become leaders. The department chairperson credited him with developing a “strong, interdisciplinary research program which adds a new dimension to the existing research efforts in the department.”

However, Provost William Gingerich felt differently.

In his evaluation of Golnabi, Gingerich was quoted as saying that “in [his] academic judgement, Dr. Golnabi’s record of independent contributions to his scholar-

ship of his discipline is not adequate to merit tenure or promotion to associate.”

Despite a letter written from the entire tenured mathematical sciences department to the provost with the hopes of reversing the decision, as well as a grievance filed by the Council of New Jersey State College Locals, the university’s decision remained unchanged.

Due to this, Golnabi made the decision not to return for the upcoming academic year and has no plans on coming back.

Gingerich refused to disclose any personal matters in regards to the departure of the math professor, but did mention that the decisions on faculty personnel are “well-defined and not open to public discussion.”

Gingerich also discussed briefly what these reviews looked like.

“In faculty personnel reviews, research productivity and impact counts 40%, teaching effectiveness counts 40% and service to the university counts 20%,” Gingerich said.

Golnabi questioned the decision by the provost.

“The same provost who said that now my research is not adequate, [is] that same person last year [that] told me that I was on good track and my research was satisfactory,” Golnabi said.

Additionally, he was given no real warning about his research and believes that the system in which he was evaluated is flawed.

“If they were saying my research wasn’t satisfactory, why were no red flags presented [to me],” Golnabi said. “Specifically last year, there was no indication that my research wasn’t enough.”

Golnabi thinks that there could be more to their decision than meets the eye.

“It leads me to believe that something else is happening here,” Golnabi argued. “It is not an objective way of evaluating my research. If my peers were saying for example, that my research was not enough, that would be a different story. If I don’t survive the peer-review process, then I don’t deserve tenure or promotion, but the peer-review process is being ignored.”

Students were equally outraged with the decision. A group of students along with Golnabi had a Zoom call in June to discuss whether further action should be taken. They have also created a group chat in hopes of collaborating ideas together.

Anthony Tamberelli, a sophomore marine biology and coastal sciences major at Montclair State and a former student of Golnabi, discussed what this group is doing to bring light to his departure.

“Besides taking interviews from the students in [Golnabi’s] previous classes, we felt that reaching out to alumni could provide valuable testimonies as well as some first-hand experiences that could vouch for the presence of this currently ‘broken’ system,” Tamberelli said. “Spreading the word through our own mediums, passing on the story to other friends and also through other professional connections we might have, was another tactic we felt would ‘fill in the gaps’ and distribute the story even further.”

It’s also important to note that the provost who evaluated Golnabi has a degree in English, as Tamberelli questioned the department’s qualifications.

“The flaw mainly stems from the fact that those in the provost department that check the professors’ qualifications are not in the correct position to do so,” Tamberelli said. “Only those who have experience in the subject at hand, such as mathematics professionals checking mathematics professors, should be responsible for renewing or terminating tenures for professors.”

Tamberelli and his fellow students are committed to making sure the flaws in the tenure system change and other professors don’t have similar problems to Golnabi.

“Fixing the broken cog or cogs in the system that permit these dubious and inequitable procedures to be conducted without reprimand should and will be the first step to buffing out the flaws in this system,” Tamberelli said.



Examples of the fabrics people can buy from Kayla Abella.

Photo courtesy of Kayla Abella

From Making Meal Plans to Making Masks

Alyssa Smolen
Staff Writer

Before the new coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak occurred in March, Kayla Abella, a senior nutrition and food science major, would commute to Montclair State University's campus, babysit a local family in her town and rest by watching "The Office." Since quarantine interrupted this routine, Abella now spends her days practicing yoga, cooking at home and making some money on the side by making masks.

Once it became clear to the public that wearing facial coverings or masks was one of the best ways to stop the spread of COVID-19, Abella saw an opportunity she couldn't pass up. She also noticed that many of the facial masks she purchased were uncomfortable and decided that she wanted to make a product that would be easier to wear.

"I started coming up with ideas to make them more comfortable and safe," Abella said. "[And] because people said fabric masks weren't safe."

After hearing this, she designed a mask that would check both boxes.

"If you double line them and make a pocket to add a filter, that makes it a lot safer and they are still comfy to wear," Abella said.

Abella easily made a profit since the demand for face coverings is so high. She makes \$7 per mask but offers a deal if individuals purchase three masks.

Abella donates extra masks to charities like the Red Cross and to her local hospital where they are given to patients who don't have them. The Red Cross gives the donated masks to the homeless in order to keep everyone safe.

Since starting this endeavor in May, Abella has donated more than 20 masks to charities in her area.

Abella most often sells her masks to friends and family.

"All my friends will tell their family," Abella said. "I got a lot of family orders."

Abella wanted the masks to appeal to all customers so more people would order masks and wear them to stop the spread of the virus.

"I bought a bunch of different fabrics," Abella said. "I got more feminine fabrics, more masculine, neutral, kids colors and patterns."

Kayla Tozzi, a classmate, friend and recent Montclair State dietetics graduate, supported Abella by buying a few masks.

"They are comfortable and allow for a filter to be placed in them if this makes you more comfortable," Tozzi said. "They are adjustable around the ears by ties and it is my go-to mask."

Abella does make custom masks for customers if they offer to give her the fabric. Her uncle, for example, requested a "Grateful Dead" themed mask. Abella just asked that he supply her with the material to make it.

After months of making masks, Abella can make three masks in 30 minutes, which is a turnaround time of about 10 minutes per mask.

Tim DeNigris, Abella's long-term boyfriend, has observed her dedication to helping the community for years now.

"She would spend hours a day making custom masks for people who asked and [was also] donating masks on top of that," DeNigris said.

Abella plans to keep her mask business running when she begins her last semester this fall. It's no wonder Abella was interested in making masks as she values

health overall. When Abella graduates, she plans to apply for her dietetic internship with a concentration in wellness.

"Even in stressful situations, like what is happening now, she will always find a way to help others and she loves doing it," DeNigris said.

Abella's business can be supported through her Facebook page or her personal blog on Instagram, @Nutrikay.



Abella wearing her personally designed mask.

Photo courtesy of Kayla Abella

Just a Bite: With @Gourmetbailey

End of Summer Salad



Enjoy this summer salad between meals or as a side to your main dish.

Samantha Bailey | *The Montclarion*

Samantha Bailey
Staff Writer

As summer comes to an end, I wanted to give you all one last bite of those fresh summer flavors with one of my all-time favorite flavors. It's easy, but just a bit time-consuming. This salad, whose recipe my uncle recently passed on to me, is usually served as a palette cleanser between the pasta and main course or as a side with your main dish. For this recipe, you'll need to have a sharp knife so you can easily chop up your ingredients. Another handy tool is a mandolin, which will help slice your apples consistently and evenly. There are only five ingredients in this salad so it's perfect for when you don't want something complicated. What you'll need is:

- * 4 granny smith apples
- * 3 heads of fennel
- * 3 to 4 lemons, juiced
- * 1 tsp of olive oil
- * Freshly cracked black pepper

To start, wash your apples and fennel. Next, cut the stems off the fennel so only the white root remains. Slice the root through the center and continue to peel back each layer of the fennel root until you are left with the center part and throw that part away. It's similar to an onion. Once all the layers are separated, slice each of them into tiny strips, like the size of a matchstick. Once you're done slicing all the fennel layers, add them to a large bowl and set them aside. Cut the apples lengthwise in half with the skin on, starting at the stem going

down. Open each side of the apple and remove the center core with a melon baller along with the stem. Set them aside. Now, it is time to grab your mandolin if you have one. I use it on the largest setting and carefully put the apple cut side down and slice it. If you don't have a mandolin, cut your apple slices about a ¼ inch thick. Once you've done it to all eight halves, cut each of the slices into small matchstick-size pieces. They should be similar in size to the fennel pieces. After all the slices are cut, add them to the big bowl where your fennel pieces are. That was the hard part of this recipe. Now for the easy part. Grab your three to four lemons and juice them. Once you have the juice, add it to the big bowl and mix it all in together.

After all the fennel and apple pieces are coated, get your olive oil and throw it in the bowl. I know it doesn't seem like a lot of oil, but it goes a long way in muting the tartness from the lemon. Once you're done adding the liquids, get a pepper grinder and crack fresh pepper on top. I like to do about 10-15 twists. Stir and let sit in the fridge. This salad tastes best when it sits for at least four hours but you can let it sit in the fridge for four to five days. It's a perfect addition to any Labor Day barbecue and it's great to keep in the fridge as a healthy post-dinner snack. While this recipe seems rather complicated, don't be intimidated. It's only a few ingredients with a lot of manual labor. But, I promise, it is worth it. Until the next bite.



The cracked pepper details make all the difference.

Samantha Bailey | *The Montclarion*



Keep your apple skin on to lock in the maximum amount of tart flavor.

Samantha Bailey | *The Montclarion*



The stress of quarantine has caused some people to gain some weight and that is okay.

Danielle DeRosa | The Montclarion

The ‘Quarantine 15’

Alyssa Smolen
Staff Writer

The summer months are normally filled with beach trips, bikini photo shoots and endless hours of laying by the pool. The coronavirus pandemic, however, has caused many to stay up late indulging in snacks, binging Netflix shows and move their bodies way less than before.

Developing one or two of these habits may not cause someone to gain a few pounds, but a combination of them can result in unhealthiness to ones body.

In this unprecedented time, nearly every student’s body has had to deal with unexpected stressors such as the abrupt switch to remote learning, unexpected unemployment and the fear of getting sick and trying to keep loved ones out of harm’s way.

Mia Funcheon, a recent Montclair State University dietetics graduate, has noticed her energy levels change during the pandemic.

“I often feel more tired than usual and less energetic,” Funcheon said. “It can be hard, but recognizing that I’m

feeling this way helps me to figure out ways to get out of these funks.”

Funcheon also expressed how she feels that gaining weight due to the circumstances and lack of resources should be more recognized.

“Gaining weight during this pandemic is so normal and it should be more normalized than it is,” Funcheon said. For a brief period of time during the pandemic, grocery stores weren’t able to restock food fast enough. Many relied on takeout, delivery or shelf-stable pantry meals.

Gyms were also ordered to close which threw off many people’s daily routines of working out.

Sabrina Rice, a senior fashion studies major, had her fitness routine altered as a result of the pandemic.

“I used to be pretty active during the day and went to the gym a few times a week, but I never really got into at-home workouts,” Rice said. “Being back at school it’s been easier to get back to a more normal routine taking walks on campus and waking up for class.”

In a thin-focused society, the thought of

gaining a few pounds especially before the summer could send someone into a downward spiral.

Fiorella DiCarlo, a registered dietitian from New York, had some encouraging words regarding the pandemic and weight gain.

“This is a very stressful unprecedented time,” DiCarlo said. “It makes sense that there might be some emotional eating going on.”

DiCarlo has years of experience, counseling individuals regarding weight as an eating disorder dietitian.

DiCarlo recommends that individuals who have noticed weight gain during this time should not stop eating the foods that they were eating before, but instead add nourishing foods to their meals like a side of fruit or vegetables.

“When someone comes out of their base weight, I don’t believe that there is one food culprit,” DiCarlo said. “It’s when people start eating out of their hunger cues consistently and emotionally.”

changed the amount of time I spend doing things to help keep my mental health in check and care for myself” Shaber said. “I make a point of spending time each day crafting or baking. I also spend a small chunk of time cleaning up, doing dishes or doing laundry.”

The coronavirus pandemic has completely altered the way in which people live. Many were forced into uncertain situations causing weight gain and disrupting routines. However, it is important to realize that once things return to normal, external stressors will disappear and previously gained weight will likely go away as well.

It is also important for people to give themselves grace and patience when maneuvering through this new normal.

“We are all figuring it out as we go along. There is no formula that we were given during this. We all got a little unraveled in our own different ways.” DiCarlo said.

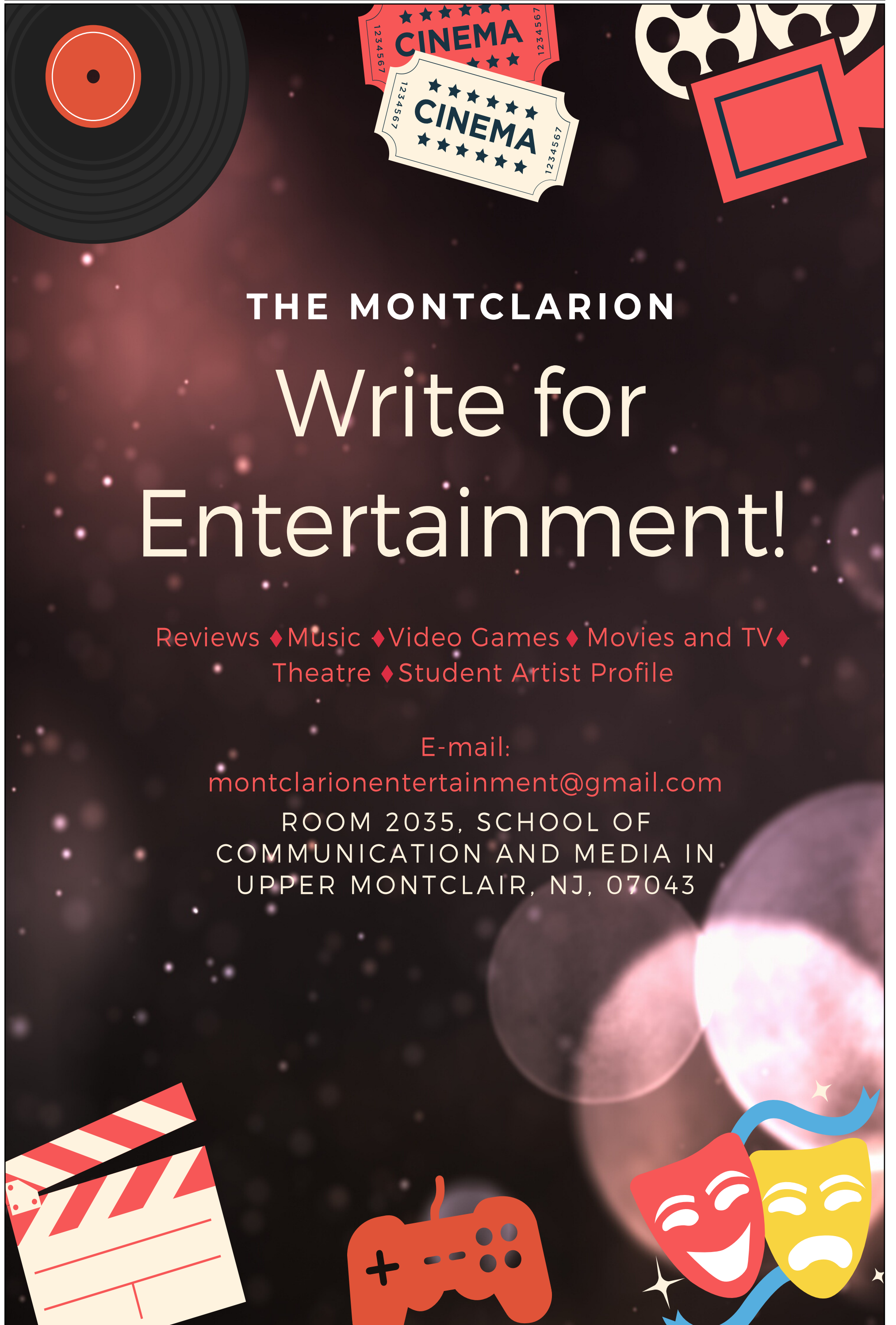


Fiorella DiCarlo on set for her YouTube video series “Living in Italian.”

Photo courtesy of Fiorella DiCarlo



Senior sociology major Hannah Shaber adjusts to living in a pandemic by managing how much time she spends on certain activities.



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ROOM 2035, SCHOOL OF
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Thank You, President Cole

In a press release posted last week, Montclair State University announced President Susan A. Cole will be retiring on July 1 following the end of the academic year. Cole has been Montclair State's president for 23 years, leaving behind a long legacy abundant in progress but not void of criticism.

Cole began her time as president in 1998, becoming Montclair State's eighth president and first woman president in university history. Since the beginning of her time in office, Montclair State enrollment has grown from 12,000 students to 21,000 students.

A large part of that growth can be credited to the four new schools established since Cole's occupancy. These include the School of Communication and Media, the John J. Cali School of Music and its Department of Theatre and Dance, University College and the School of Nursing.

The School of Communication and Media and the John J. Cali School of Music have grown rapidly and become nationally recognized institutes of higher learning.

Furthermore, during Cole's time in office, Montclair State added an estimated 3 million square feet to its campus by opening the new Feliciano School of Business, building the Center for Environmental and Life Sciences and the Center for Computing and Information Science. During her tenure, she also added New Jersey's first and largest public

and private residential and dining complex.

All of these accomplishments, in addition to the many more unnamed, made during Cole's tenure were included in the press release last week, so why re-identify them again now?

For a university president who has accomplished so much and made Montclair State a powerhouse of New Jersey education, Cole has seldom been popular among the student body.

Because most of the people who become involved with Montclair State only have that firsthand connection for just four years, it is difficult for them to evaluate the progress that is being made around them.

Students often complain how Montclair State's campus is always under construction. They complain the construction is loud, disruptive to the flow of the campus and unpleasant to look at.

While this construction may be obstructive to students in their short time on campus, those buildings will eventually be the home to thousands of students, all of whom now have the opportunity to earn a financially manageable degree and pursue their passion with a well-equipped mind.

It is important to recognize The Montclarion itself has been critical of Cole and her administration. Multiple editorials have been published scrutinizing her constant raises of both university tuition and



Ian Long | The Montclarion

her salary while problems remained unresolved within the safety of dining and infrastructure.

While it is important to keep your leaders in check and challenge them to do right on behalf of those they lead, it is imperative to remember that nobody is perfect.

A quote by Albert J. Dunlop reads, "the price of leadership is criticism."

Cole has certainly paid that price and it is now the responsibility of all university faculty, staff and students alike to familiarize ourselves with her resume and say thank you.

Despite these moments of unpopularity, Cole never stopped developing Montclair State. After her retirement was announced, Cole was asked about her reasons for stepping down.

"The university is organic and ever changing and meant for the ages, not just the decades," Cole said. "And, as for me, if I stayed here for another 20 or so years, I would still never accomplish what I came to do, because my dreams and goals for the university keep growing with the university."

Unfortunately, due to the sharp decline in university

funds due to the COVID-19 pandemic, much of that development is at risk of coming to a halt.

Regardless, Cole's more than two decades of service to Montclair State and its now impressively vast and capable community has provided the blueprints for years of recovery and decades of advancement and progress.

Thank you, President Cole.

Campus
Voices:

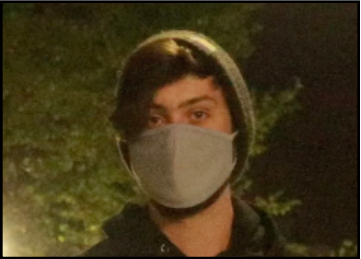
What do you
think of President
Susan Cole's
legacy?

By Brielle E. Wyka



"I definitely came to Montclair [State] with the impression that [it was] kind and inclusive. I knew that even if I didn't know that much about Susan Cole, I felt proud to be a Montclair student and to have Susan Cole leading us. And I feel like now it's showing how well Montclair [State] is doing compared to other schools during this pandemic and coming back to campus."

- Haley Amann
Acting BFA
Sophomore



"If she's in charge of all of this COVID-19 preparedness stuff, then I think she's doing a good job. We're one of the only schools that are open in New Jersey that hasn't had a big shutdown. I don't really know her academically but I do have to commend her for her COVID-19 preparation."

- Charles Falotico
Communication & Media Arts
Freshman



"I was impressed that there was female leadership when I was applying to the school but since then I haven't really heard anything about [her]."

- Manya Mrozinski
Dance
Freshman



"All I've heard is great things about Susan Cole. Montclair State [used to be] a small [school], and when Susan Cole took the job, she basically transformed Montclair State University."

- Kevin Bernard
Political Science
Junior

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The Little University That Could



ANTON SPECHT
ASSISTANT
OPINION EDITOR

It doesn't come without great concern that Montclair State University is up and running in-person classes with students living on campus. Yet somehow, amidst all the controversy and universities across the nation both shutting down and sending students home, Montclair State seems to have a strong and viable plan in place to keep students safely on campus.

The fall 2020 semester is going to be anything but a traditional one, yet the administration is doing everything they can to make it somewhat normal. As a student in my last academic year living on campus, I can appreciate that effort wholeheartedly.

The school has optioned to take a mostly virtual route. From just conversing with my peers, it seems as though most students have no more than two in-person classes if any at all. I myself only have one and it's not even completely traditional. It falls under the HawkMIX (HMX) category, which is a mix of in-person and online instruction.

Montclair State did not have to give us the opportunity to remain on campus and feel like real college students again.



Danielle DeRosa | The Montclarion

The university understands the majority of its students want to be here and want that college experience. They've done a tremendous job accommodating all of us through a myriad of ways.

For students who are more wary about the virus, the option to attend in-person classes virtually is offered. For the students who are more comfortable attending in-person classes, socially distanced seating has been implemented.

Next, we have Hawk Check, which all students must fill out 6-12 hours before coming to the main campus. Although

other schools may have a similar form, Hawk Check feels especially unique and it has even gotten a story and appearance on News 12 New Jersey.

Additionally, there is an app Montclair State is using called the "RAVE Guardian App" which allows students to report any violation they see or hear of the university's COVID-19 protocols. Likewise, each student living on campus is only allowed one guest per person in the living space. For now, these guests are limited to only other students living on campus.

My biggest concern is the people who currently aren't and later won't adhere to the school's protocols. There were already eleven students sent home the weekend before classes started because they were gathered together without masks and proper social distancing. The fact that Montclair State suspended them immediately and left the rest of the campus untouched but with a stern warning was a sign of good faith for me.

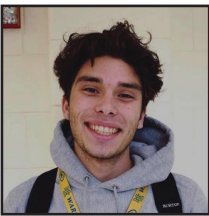
We've seen what can happen in situations like these through examples like the University of North Carolina and the University of Notre Dame. Those schools, although much bigger in size, had cases blow up in a matter of days. For Montclair State to send any potential violators home within a day makes me feel like we are in good hands with our school.

Coming into the semester I was wary and wasn't sure if living on campus was going to be the right move. Montclair State is making sure that those worries can be tucked away. Our university has ascended past many others, even within the state of New Jersey, making for the perfect underdog story.

Anton Specht, a senior television & digital media major, is in his second year as an assistant opinion editor for The Montclarion.

Just Happy To Be Here

For freshman who lost their senior year of high school, just being at Montclair State is a win



ALEX PAVLJUK
CONTRIBUTING
WRITER

The freshman experience at Montclair State University this fall is undoubtedly different than it has been for any other class that has walked and resided on campus before. In many ways, those sophomores, juniors and seniors who have decided to try out this "new normal" might see this lifestyle we're forced to attempt due to the COVID-19 pandemic as stifling and irritable in comparison to semesters past.

Yet, for those of us freshmen who have decided to attempt living on campus even under these circumstances, we've found a sense of security and clarity in being here rather than at home.

On March 13, 2020, the day my high school and so many others went home from school and work for the last time, the entire world changed. Normalcy was thrown so far out the window it might take years just to recognize the sight of it due to the pandemic lockdowns.

As seniors in high school at the start of lockdown, we lost everything that was guaranteed to every single senior class before and maybe even after us. The high school class of 2020 were the

black sheep that would never experience a senior prom, or as obsolete as it may seem, a graduation ceremony with weight and meaning.

For six months now, nothing we have experienced has been normal. Much like everyone else, our worlds have been altered for better or worse. Despite this sudden change, we have finally been granted the chance to feel normal once again in simply returning to school.

As freshmen, we have no real rational or concrete depiction of what college is. We don't know what it is supposed to feel like and we don't know what it was like before we got here. Movies like "Animal House" or that time you visited your cousin don't exactly depict college

accurately. The protocol and lifestyle before COVID-19 are obsolete and insignificant to us as freshmen.

This has been a common theme throughout many conversations and interactions I've had with other members of the class of 2024 around campus. Whether it is waiting in socially distanced lines at the bookstore or walking out of Sam's Place with our meals ordered on GrubHub, the consensus is these practices are reassuring.

For once, many students can experience something new and exciting while not losing sight of the pandemic that continues to hang over our heads like a dark cloud.

In a lot of ways, it's special we are even here. Many of us are the only ones in our friend groups from back home to even be given this opportunity. We have little to no basis or preconceived notions of what is normal and what is not. Therefore, walking around in masks and waiting in spacious lines while still getting a healthy amount of both in-person and online opportunities while living on campus is, for the time being, "normal."

It's oddly comforting that for once in over half a year, we can once again feel as if things aren't all that bad.

Alex Pavljuk, a freshman communication & media arts major, is in his first year as a contributing writer for The Montclarion.



Danielle DeRosa | The Montclarion

Someone Needs to (Hawk) Check the Students



CASEY MASTERSON
FEATURE EDITOR

Over the summer, Montclair State University students were told by administration they needed to complete Hawk Check before move-in and any time they wished to step foot on campus.

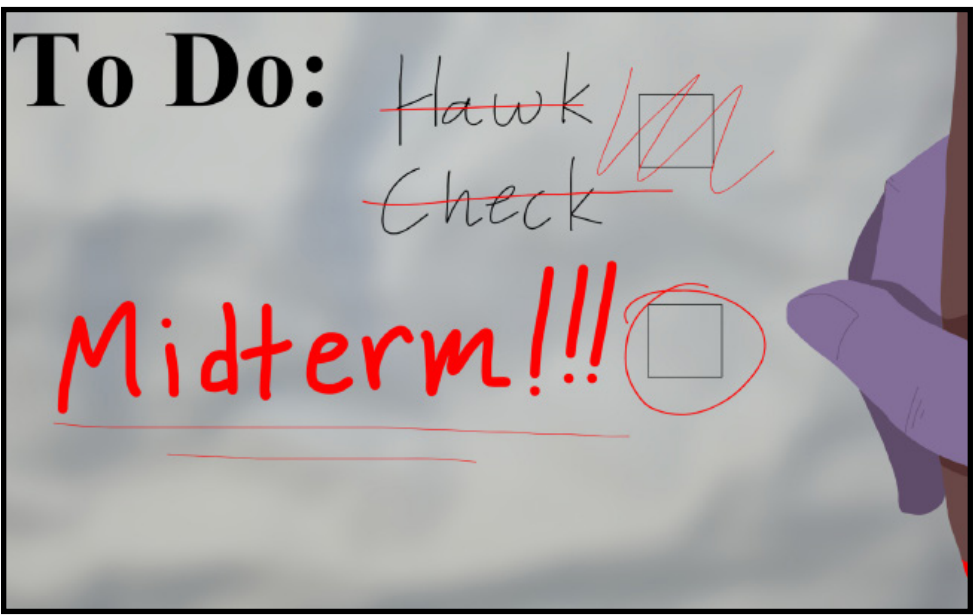
Hawk Check is an online forum which gauges students' risk of spreading COVID-19 to the campus community by asking a few simple questions.

However, this system proves rather ineffective, as it doesn't hold students accountable to complete their Hawk Check and therefore puts campus health at the mercy of the student's diligence.

Hawk Check is intended to be a safeguard for the students. It makes sure that people don't have COVID-19 symptoms or have not visited high-risk states. This sort of questionnaire is not uncommon and can be found in places like doctor's offices or hair salons.

If any of the answers give the impression this respective person may be at risk for spreading the disease, they are not to be admitted to the establishment.

Now, there are some instances on campus where Hawk Check is mandated for people. For example, students must complete Hawk Check before go-



Katlyn Pruitt | The Montclarion

ing to workout at the campus recreation center or attending a live organization event.

These types of checks are imperative for something like Hawk Check to work. There needs to be some sort of incentive.

This is the problem. Aside from events and work, there is no reason to do Hawk Check.

I'm not denying what Hawk Check is doing is important. In fact, it is vital for campus safety. Allow me to throw a scenario at you, however, to prove my point.

You are a student. You have three midterms, five papers, two books to read

and countless assignments to submit on Canvas. The last thing on your to-do list is Hawk Check.

You go home to relax for the weekend. Your uncle comes over to see how things are going. He breaks out into a coughing fit.

You are so stressed you think nothing of it. Worse, you keep repeating that although you feel sick, you can't miss this midterm. You go to your one in-person class anyway.

You didn't fill out the Hawk Check because you were so busy studying that you forgot. Your class is now potentially infected because of your actions.

This student remembered his grades and assignments over Hawk Check for a reason. There are consequences if you don't do them. You can get an F, you might even have to take that course again.

There are no consequences if you don't submit your Hawk Check before you step onto campus. Nobody is there to survey.

The problem, however, is that there are far too many students to police their submissions. No one will be checking up on every single one of our thousands of students every day to ensure they filled out their Hawk Check.

There is no clear solution to this problem. Hawk Check, in theory, is a great idea. There needs to be some sort of safeguard for the campus.

The format of the app itself, however, doesn't account for the lack of motivation students may have to abide by it. A popular mentality among people is, "If I don't have to do it, then why should I?"

Montclair State needs to work on the "should" question in order to safeguard the campus itself, as well as its community.

Casey Masterson, a senior German major, is in her second year as the feature editor for The Montclarion.

The Hypocrisy of the Media and Its Treatment Toward Melania Trump



KARINA FLOREZ
CONTRIBUTING
WRITER

At the end of the summer, Joe Biden and President Donald Trump were formally nominated by their respective political parties to run as candidates in the 2020 presidential election. This year's conventions were largely different than years prior due to the coronavirus pandemic forcing both parties to re-imagine how they should be held.

This year, I tuned into both conventions, partly to see how each party would present themselves, but also to see the dynamic between Trump and Biden.

First Lady Melania Trump's speech was what sparked my curiosity the most, not because of what she spoke about, but more so because of the hateful comments people left on social media platforms.

One Instagram user commented, "I don't think she knows she can keep the money when she leaves."

Another user, referring to the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), wrote, "Where is ICE when you need them!?"

Obviously, there will always be internet trolls, but my immediate thought

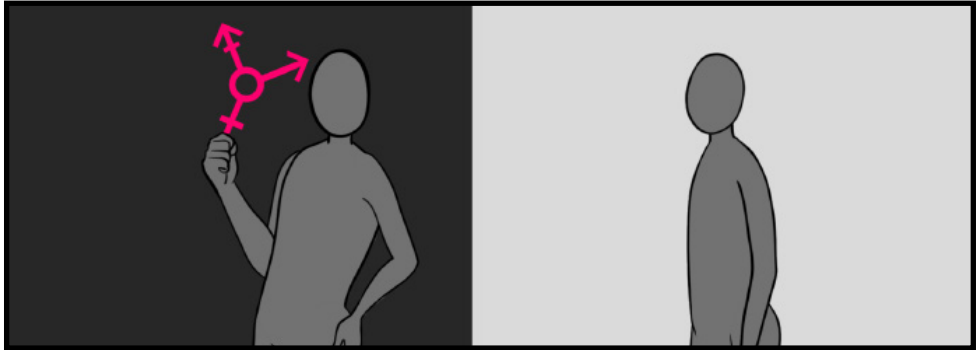
when reading the comment about ICE was, "Are these people leftists?" If so, why are they criticizing her for things leftists praise? Melania Trump was born in a foreign country, speaks or is familiar with several languages and came to the United States for the opportunity to live a better life.

By all means, she has succeeded. Her modeling career was immensely successful. She was photographed for several magazines, including Harper's Bazaar, Vanity Fair and GQ. She married into a wealthy family and lives a financially stable life she would not have been able to live in her home country.

I'm not a Republican and the fact I have to admit that is silly.

These leftists are not concerned with facts but merely their own perceived reality. They wouldn't so much bother to realize Melania Trump came to the United States in 1996 by acquiring a visitor's visa, which eventually became a work visa, before even stepping onto American soil. She also didn't meet her future husband until after arriving to the United States.

There seems to be a consensus that Melania Trump married Donald Trump in order to become a citizen, but they didn't get married until 2005, the year she became a citizen. It seems because Melania Trump married an older, wealthy man that she's nothing more than a gold digger and her personal



Katlyn Pruitt | The Montclarion

achievements are only because of her status as a member of the Trump family.

When I bring up Melania Trump and feminism, people quickly dismiss me. Apparently, she's not part of the "feminism is for everyone" conversation because of the person she married. One colleague told me she married and tolerates the biggest bully there is.

While this may be true, I do not demonize her for continuing the marriage. The fact that she has her own anti-bullying campaign, when her own husband has his problematic moments, could even be a jab at him.

Oftentimes, we regard public figures without the idea that they're also human beings. Whether they have several zeroes in the bank or not, they also face everyday problems like any other person. Whether or not Melania Trump is aware of how she's perceived by the media is not clear. But if she is, she does

quite a good job at hiding it from them and I don't blame her.

Having a husband with a loose mouth, I don't think Melania wants to constantly defend her husband's actions to the media and the general public. She is not responsible for her husband. He is a grown adult.

It's clear that for the past few years, where you stand on the political spectrum can make you or break you socially. There's no in-between, which is dangerous. One hiccup in your beliefs can mean the difference between being praised for your "woke-ness" or being canceled because of your opinion, despite the undeniable right to be entitled to one.

Karina Florez, a junior journalism major, is in her first year as a contributing writer for The Montclarion.

Supreme Court Justice or Supreme Court Superhero?



BROOKE ALVINE
ASSISTANT COPY
EDITOR

Over the weekend, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died at the age of 87, leaving an open spot on the bench for the first time since Justice Anthony Scalia's death in 2016. For Americans everywhere, her death has sent shockwaves throughout the country and has left us with feelings of grief and hopelessness.

It is natural to grieve the death of such an influential figure in American history. Because of Ginsburg, women were recognized by the law as having the same rights as men. Not only that, but her fight for women's equality made discrimination on the basis of sex illegal.

Being able to sign a mortgage without a man, owning a bank account without a male cosigner and having a job regardless of your gender or maternal status can all be attributed to Ginsburg's dedicated career. But despite these monumental accomplishments, which are undoubtedly deserving of praise, the way in which many are grieving Ginsburg as a mythical American hero is problematic.

Like any human being, Ginsburg had serious flaws within her legal career both before and after becoming a United States Supreme Court justice. Her controversial rulings on the rights of indigenous people left many Americans feeling that for their communities,



Ian Long | The Montclarion

Ginsburg was not their hero. This stark clash of opinions has created a culture of treating her death as the final straw for our country. If one woman's death results in the possible demise of the entire United States, then quite frankly I'm not sure if our country would have even made it this far.

Government figures, as large as the media and popular culture may portray them, are not the sole reason our country sinks or swims.

This phenomenon of treating government figures like superheroes isn't unique to Ginsburg. Other modern politicians like Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez and President Donald Trump find themselves in the same glorifying spotlight that often negates their political wrongdoings no matter how large they may be.

We must remember that a seat as

a Supreme Court justice is a lifelong position, often allowing for newly appointed justices to serve almost half their lifetime ruling on matters of the United States Constitution. They are appointed by the president and voted on by members of the Senate without ever being agreed upon by citizens of the United States.

While I'm not arguing for a Supreme Court popular vote, it is concerning to me that anyone should worship a person in a position they never directly elected.

A singular person who holds power from the time they are appointed until the time they die cannot possibly be also responsible for the total prosperity of the people they represent. Additionally, their eventual deaths cannot leave the entire country without any hope for the future.

I do not believe Ginsburg's death will be the nail in the coffin for America. It is saddening for sure, but it will not be the undoing of everything she fought for and everything still being fought for today.

Instead of placing the entire weight and success of the country on a position that feels reminiscent of lifelong monarchies gone by, Americans should treat Ginsburg's death as the tragedy that it is, but nothing more. Her death was surely one felt by the entire country, but the sun will still rise and the government will still travel forward toward a new election and an eventual new Supreme Court justice.

If we fall into the trap of making our paid government officials fill the place of superheroes in our lives, we will fail to recognize they are just as imperfect as you and me. Instead, we must recognize both their successes and failures and not allow the media and popular culture to make them larger than life.

We can mourn Ginsburg and feel her loss within our justice system, but we cannot let her death be the scapegoat for all future failures of our government.

During her life, Ginsburg was a champion for women's legal rights and made history in her appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court bench. Now in the wake of her death, may her memory be a blessing and her achievements and failures be a lesson to all.

Brooke Alvine, a senior history major in the teacher education program, is in her second year as an assistant copy editor for The Montclarion.



Thumbs Up

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy reopens indoor restaurant dining to 50% capacity

Zendaya becomes youngest person to win an Emmy for lead actress in a drama for her role in HBO's "Euphoria"

U.S. Department of the Interior announces the return of Fat Bear Week at Katmai National Park in Alaska



Thumbs Down

COVID-19 U.S. death toll exceeds 200,000 as vaccines remain in development

Supreme Court Justice, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, passes away at the age of 87

Zero of the four officers who killed Breonna Taylor are charged with homicide





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The 2020 MTV VMAs Show That Music Can Still Bring People Together



Ariana Grande (left) and Lady Gaga (right) won the VMA for Best Collaboration.

Photo courtesy of MTV

Caitlin Aristizabal
Contributing Writer

MTV's 2020 Video Music Awards (VMA) might have looked a little different this year without a live audience, but the night of many firsts did not disappoint.

The awards show, dedicated to the unexpected death of actor Chadwick Boseman, known for his inspirational role as Black Panther, has always taken pride in the fact that music brings people together.

The host of the evening, Keke Palmer, took a moment at the beginning of the show to say "enough is enough" in response to the recent shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin. The 27-year-old actress and singer is the second youngest person and the first woman of color to ever host the VMAs alone.

"We must continue the fight to end systemic racism," Palmer said. "The leaders of that movement are you, us, the people watching tonight. It's our time to be the change we want to see. We need to come together. And music has that power. Music can help us heal. It's all love and that is what tonight is about."

The Weeknd kicked off the evening with a blinding performance of his hit song "Blinding Lights" on the Edge

Sky Deck at Hudson Yards in Manhattan, New York. After winning Video of the Year and Best R&B, the singer also used his speech to speak up for racial injustice.

"It's really hard for me to celebrate right now and enjoy this moment, so I'm just going to say justice for Jacob Blake and justice for Breonna Taylor," he said.

The Weeknd wasn't the only artist who used his stage time to deliver a political message to the audience.

Rapper DaBaby teamed up with hip-hop dance crew, the Jabbawoockeez, for his VMA performance debut that made a statement about police brutality in the United States. The act ended with DaBaby standing on a cop car in front of an image of New York City in flames. Next to him was a sign that read "Stop Killing Us."

On the same note, actress Sofia Carson, presented H.E.R. with the Video for Good award. The 23-year-old R&B singer-songwriter won for her "I Can't Breathe" music video, which highlights police brutality in the United States. Sponsored by Pepsi, the company announced their \$100,000 donation to the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in support of the cause.

The annual awards show, which was supposed to take place at the Barclays Center in Brooklyn, New York, was filmed in various parts of New York

City as safety concerns grew amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

MTV also created two new award categories as a result of quarantine restrictions. Madison Beer presented the award for Best Music Video From Home, which she accepted on behalf of Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande for their single, "Stuck With U." CNCO won Best Quarantine Performance for their MTV Unplugged at Home performance.

While the VMA performances are typically surrounded by thousands of screaming fans in an arena, this year the show gave us a preview of what concerts in a post-pandemic world might look like.

Maluma, who took home the award for Best Latin Music Video, performed his new single "Hawái" with a drive-in style audience. Keke Palmer and CNCO also performed with a socially distanced audience sitting in their cars.

The highly anticipated VMA debut of the boy band BTS was another highlight of the night. They gave an explosive performance of their new single, "Dynamite." The group also enjoyed several wins for Best Group, Best Pop and Best K-Pop.

Miley Cyrus took viewers by surprise as she sparked flashbacks to her 2013 hit song and music video, "Wrecking Ball," ending the performance of her new song, "Midnight Sky," on top of a swinging disco ball.

It was a big night for many, especially Lady Gaga who returned to the VMA stage to perform for the first time since 2013. She gave an out-of-this-world performance with a medley of songs off her sixth studio album, "Chromatica." Gaga is best known for her eccentric red carpet looks and did not disappoint with her outer space-like costume changes and cohesive facial masks.

Ariana Grande joined Gaga on stage to perform their hit single, "Rain on Me." The duo and their background dancers were one of the only acts of the night to wear masks throughout their entire performance. Gaga and Grande's song took home three of the famous Moonman statues for Best Collaboration, Song of

the Year and Best Cinematography.

Aside from winning the award for Artist of the Year, Gaga was also named the first ever recipient of the 2020 MTV Video Music Tricon Award, an honor given to someone with achievements in three or more fields of entertainment.

"I want nothing more than to be your artist of 2020," Gaga said during her acceptance speech. "It's a total privilege. I love you, stay safe, speak your mind and I might sound like a broken record but wear a mask. It's a sign of respect."

To close the show, the Black Eyed Peas sang "VIDA LOCA" off their newest album and left everyone feeling nostalgic as they finished the performance with their 2009 hit song, "I Gotta Feeling."

"Wakanda forever," Will.I.Am said as the performance ended. "Black Lives Matter."

While it might have been different than past years, the MTV VMAs still presented a night filled with music, love, gratitude and hope for a better future.



Miley Cyrus ends her performance of "Midnight Sky" on a disco "Wrecking Ball."

Photo courtesy of MTV



Maluma wins the Best Latin Award for his song, "Qué Pena" ft. J Balvin.

Photo courtesy of MTV

Top Picks to Stream

Best of the Month

‘Norsemen’
on Netflix



Photo courtesy of Netflix

If you like “Monty Python,” “Game of Thrones,” and the occasional potty jokes, the Norwegian comedy “Norsemen” is right up your alley.

The show does an excellent job of contrasting its modern language and humor against beautiful Scandinavian backdrops. Fans of the show “Vikings” or period pieces in general won’t be left disappointed.

The show’s writing, at its best, rivals that of comedy-classics “Arrested Development” and “The Office.” You may want to put on the subtitles; while the cast’s natural Norwegian accents add authenticity to the series’ dialogue, it can often be hard to keep up with the fast-paced jokes.

Three seasons of Norsemen are available to stream now on Netflix. Check out the full season three review on The Montclarion website.

- Timothy Rabel
Contributing Writer

‘Come to Daddy’
on Amazon Prime Video



Photo courtesy of Saban Films

This 2020 debut feature length horror film was directed by Ant Timpson. “Come to Daddy” is a slow burn with some dark humor and insane twists. What starts out as a familial drama gets darker and weirder with every turn.

Timpson’s debut feature film follows Norval Greenwood, played by Elijah Wood, as he reunites with his estranged father and gets far more than he bargained for in the process. Unlike twists in films such as “Parasite,” there are hints throughout the film’s beginning that foreshadow the storyline going haywire.

If you are looking for a fun yet strange horror movie for the upcoming Halloween season, look no further than “Come to Daddy.” The film is currently streaming on Amazon Prime Video.

For a full review on the horror film, check out The Monclarion website.

- Casey Masterson
Feature Editor

‘The Umbrella Academy’ Are the Heroes We Need Now



Season two of “The Umbrella Academy” premiered on Netflix on July 31.

Photo courtesy of Netflix

Maddye Belov-Boxer
Contributing Writer

In the year since the dynamic, darkly comical and eccentric first season of “The Umbrella Academy” premiered on Netflix, the world has changed in unimaginable ways.

Amidst a surreal landscape featuring the civil rights movement of our time, a global pandemic, a looming election and an overwhelming amount of anxiety-inducing information, it seems appropriate that the complicated heroes of “The Umbrella Academy” find themselves in similarly turbulent times during the show’s second season, which premiered on Netflix on July 31.

Season one was near hallucinatory at times, with its stunningly graphic fight scenes, time travel shenanigans, pleasingly saturated color palette and a soundtrack running the gamut from Etta James to Toro y Moi. As a fan of the original graphic novel, I recall waiting with bated breath to see how the screen adaptation would translate the absurd narrative of volumes one and two.

The plot was loyal to the source material on a skeletal level. But, I enjoyed the story enough to shut up the nagging reader in my brain, largely because of the incredible dimension brought to the characters by some very talented actors.

Caffeine-dependent Number Five, played by Aidan Gallagher, made me particularly happy. Another noteworthy character is the lovably flawed Klaus Hargreeves, played by Robert Sheehan. I would be remiss if I did not give immense praise to Vanya Hargreeves, played by Ellen Page, who “just isn’t special.”

Season two kept the blistering cinematography of its preceding season. With six leading characters to juggle, “The Umbrella Academy,” consistently does an impressive job of giving each character their own distinct narrative as it deftly knits the main story together. The viewer might be left a little dazed at times, but a rewind is always possible for any missed details.

But where season one focused more on the adoptive family as heroes in their own strange modern world, season two snatches the Umbrella Academy out of their bubble and liter-

ally drops them into one of the most turbulent times in recent American history.

Finding themselves in Dallas, Texas during varying points of the early 1960s, the adoptive siblings are once again separated. There is a reckoning of sorts to be had here for each character, much like in the first season. But in a period much idealized by some who never experienced it, their struggles become larger than themselves.

Allison Hargreeves, played by Emmy Raver-Lampman, the only Black member of The Umbrella Academy, runs into a restaurant in a panic upon her sudden arrival only to find that it is a “whites only” establishment. Vanya is enamored with a married woman, a double whammy of sinful behavior in a time when gay people were considered mentally ill.

These are not fantastical heroic struggles, like having to implement multiverse theory to prevent the apocalypse. Real people have lived these experiences and still do every day.

“The Umbrella Academy” handles delicate topics with the humor and finesse that it has proven itself capable of. Allison’s newfound purpose and struggle as a civil rights activist

feels particularly relevant now. Klaus’s inevitable reckoning with his many traumas and addictions is honest and sympathetic.

We often find ourselves gravitating toward heroes in part because they remind us of ourselves. Their powers rarely exempt them from the consequences of being human, and if they do, they only present a new set of drawbacks. “The Umbrella Academy” constantly makes its heroes deal with problems that are beyond the simple solutions their unique abilities can provide.

As much as I love these characters, they are often myopic because of their sheltered upbringings. Perhaps this is what makes watching them clash with the real world so frightening and satisfying, and what makes me cheer out loud when they finally triumph.

In its second season, “The Umbrella Academy,” matures with a socially conscious storyline while ever upping its ante of sardonic absurdity. If you’re in the same mindset as me and you’re not sure whether you want to laugh, cry, dance or just appreciate superb cinematography and costumes, “The Umbrella Academy,” gives you what you need to do it all.



“The Umbrella Academy” is a surprising combination of sordid humor, graphic novel pizzazz and deeply human moments.

Photo courtesy of Netflix

The Dirty 9 Brings the Laughter to Campus



The Dirty 9 is an improv, sketch comedy group at Montclair State University.

Photo courtesy of Samantha Sutter

Samantha Sutter
Contributing Writer

It's March, before the new coronavirus hit New Jersey. Laughter is heard throughout Life Hall at Montclair State University on a Saturday morning. Jokes are thrown around left and right, from the few that actually show up on time. The room smells of egg and sweetened coffee from the breakfast they got at Dunkin' Donuts.

A few more students roll in and there's even some dancing involved. The last student shows up; he is about 5 minutes late and locked out. The only way they're letting him in the classroom is if he climbs through the window.

This is an average Saturday rehearsal for the Dirty 9. The Dirty 9 is an improv, sketch comedy group produced by students for students. Dirty 9, otherwise known as D9, creates all of their own original content.

Whether it's poking fun at Montclair State or something more people can relate to, watching them reminds audience members of that one embarrassing moment they had in middle school

that everyone remembers. It's all here as far as comedic content goes. Jim Ligon, the founder of D9, wanted the group to be a place where actors can get training. His ultimate vision for the group is based on the Late-Night show.

"I wanted there to be a place on this campus where people can gather and celebrate and find relief; comic relief is what that's called," Ligon said. "We're the comic relief." During the audition process, which is held once every semester, Ligon observes 30 students through a series of improv and acting games such as "Fill in the Joke."

"I'm looking for people who will form an ensemble of players who have a sensitivity to each other," Ligon said. "Some folks are good at narrative, verbal diarrhea and some folks are good at the physical stuff. So I look to create a blend."

Micheal Banza, a junior theater studies major, recalled his experience with getting into D9.

"This is a pretty intense and intimate thing to get into," Banza said. "I always felt like I was outnumbered in terms of people coming in here.



Kyler Weir carries Bryan Rodriguez during an improv game.

Photo courtesy of Samantha Sutter

They've had extensive training and I didn't have that growing up. I just knew this was something that I love to do and I have some talent to work with. [D9] makes acting very welcoming."

Joey Cooper and Joshua Cellar, sophomore musical theater majors, work solely on the acting and improv side of the group. They perform with D9 in campus events and more recently on the group's high school tours. For the schools, they have a 30-minute show where the high school audience members get involved.

"It's just a really cool way to branch out to the community and to get people to support D9, and to also get interested in Montclair [State] itself," Cooper said.

Cooper and Cellar have both tried their hand in the writing section but, according to Cooper, they "massively bombed," so they dropped it. However, the two raved about Bryan Rodriguez, a senior theater studies major, who is the go-to writer for the group.

"I struggle with regular writing, so I feel like I've really figured out something that I'm good at and I really want to hold onto that," Rodriguez said. "I think I get little ideas that pop up in my

head and I just throw them on paper and sort of just see where it goes. You don't really know where it's going to take you, but you just write with it."

In times of need, such as when D9 needs to fill up more showtime with live sketches, Rodriguez is the member who writes the comedic content.

"I didn't sleep and I just sat down with some coffee and I just typed away," Rodriguez said. "I made seven sketches and I think out of those seven, five were picked definitely."

Melanie Ruddock, a senior television and digital media major, commented on her experience working as a member of the production team for D9.

"They were all really passionate about what they were doing and their communication with us was great, which made the production side of things a lot easier," Ruddock said.

The jokes, the laughter and the enthusiasm is all here with the Dirty 9. Their performances are a, "comic explosion," if you will. They have jokes of all sorts for anyone to get out a roaring laugh, making them the people to watch at Montclair State.



Joshua Cellar poses through the window of their rehearsal space.

Photo courtesy of Samantha Sutter

Red Hawk Deck Is The New Alexander Kasser Theater for Music Students At Montclair State University

Sam Nungesser
Entertainment Editor

Six months ago, music students at Montclair State University probably did not imagine themselves beginning their fall 2020 semester with band and choral rehearsals on the seventh floor of a parking garage, yet now they are.

On Thursday, Aug. 27, the doors reopened for face-to-face instruction for music majors at Montclair State. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has silenced the halls of the John J. Cali School of Music for the last half year, things were a little different.

Taking place on one of the upper levels of Red Hawk Deck, symphonic orchestras and melodic voices were heard echoing throughout the building, restoring life and music to the campus.

With Dr. Thomas McCauley in charge of the symphonic orchestra and the chorus under the direction of Dr. Heather Buchanan, students sounded as though they never stopped.

Anthony Mazzocchi, director of the John J. Cali School of Music, said the faculty and students have been incredible in planning for the new semester.

According to Mazzocchi, the program has also designed a plan to accommodate out-of-state and international students, as well as students who are unable to make it to campus this semester.

“I’ve seen some incredibly innovative ways of delivering instruction both online and in hybrid formats,” Mazzocchi said. “As far as the science being face-to-face music making, we have come up with some great ways to perform together.”

Victoria Domiciano, a junior musical education major and chorus student, says the transition to new safety protocols has been fairly easy when it comes to creating sound.

“The university is providing us with special masks that allow us to sing with full resonance while protecting



Singers at Montclair State University sing through their masks on the seventh floor of Red Hawk Deck. Photo courtesy of Mike Peters

us,” Domiciano said. “The difficult part is knowing that the expressive part of singing, [also known as] the emotions we portray through facial expressions while we sing, will be hindered.”

Following the scientific research obtained from the University of Colorado Boulder, the school is also providing bell covers for instruments in an effort to prevent aerosol transmission of the virus. These “instrument masks” will be used with the transition to indoor rehearsals in order to stop the spread of COVID-19.

Sara Marcus, a senior music therapy major, is hopeful about this year’s concerts, guest speakers and master

classes despite them moving to virtual screenings.

“I’m looking forward to our virtual concerts and showing others that despite our setbacks, music isn’t going anywhere,” Marcus said.

Many students like Bella Rochford, a junior music therapy major, are merely excited to get back into the swing of things.

“During this pandemic, I’ve learned to never take anything for granted,” Rochford said. “So this year, I’m really looking forward to creating amazing music, reconnecting with friends and making the most of my time here at [Montclair State] while I can.”

As for future expectations, Mazzocchi is looking forward to providing an eventful year for those in the music program.

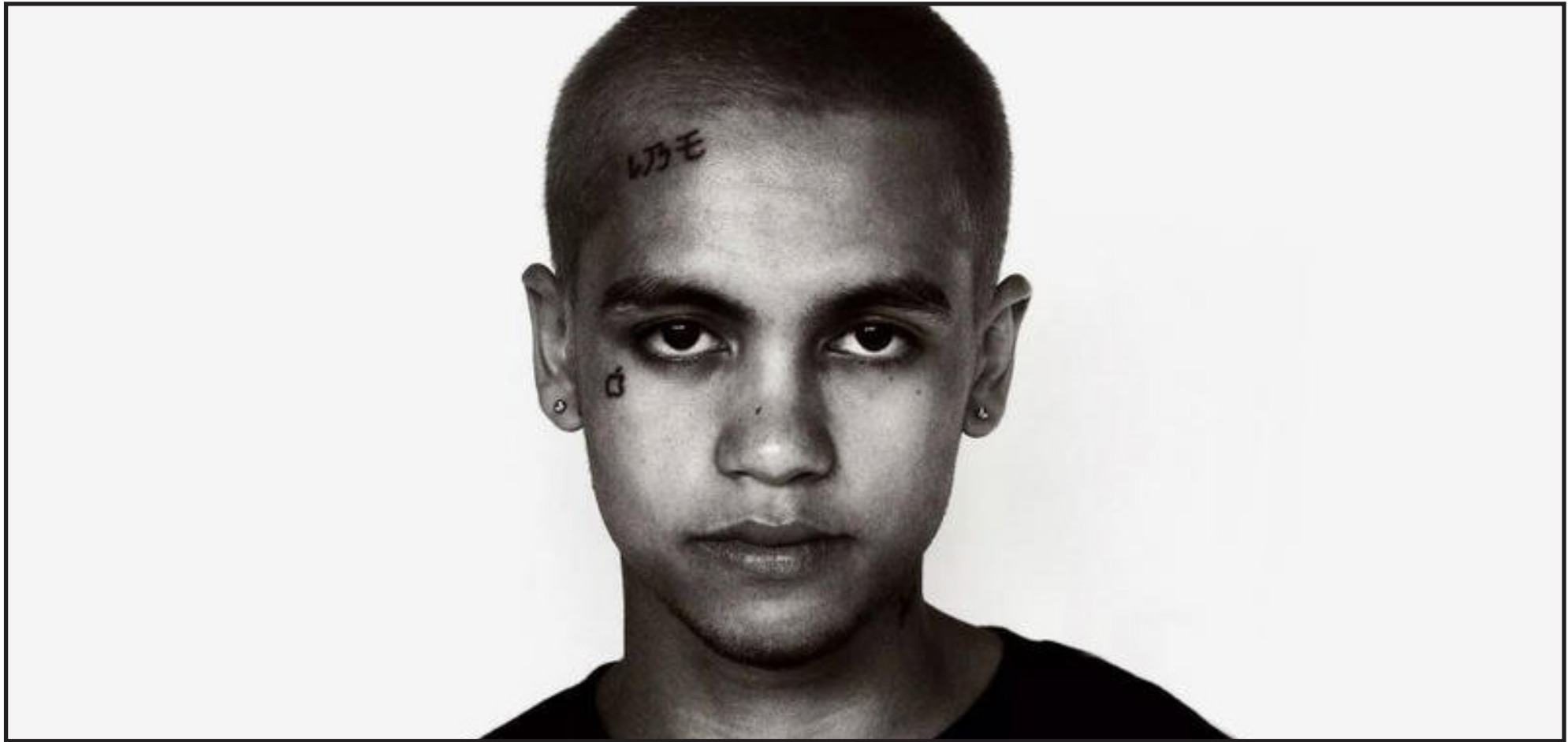
“My expectation is that we will innovate, provide great education and training to our current students, reflect on areas for growth that this pandemic has amplified and build a school of music ready to thrive like we have never seen before in 2021,” he said.

With the excitement and passion put forth by both the staff and students, there is no doubt that the music program will prosper amidst these ever-changing and unprecedented times.



Musicians kept their masks within reach as they played sitting six feet apart. Photo courtesy of Mike Peters

Dominic Fike Shows He Has Room to Improve with ‘What Could Possibly Go Wrong’



Dominic Fike is a singer-songwriter from Florida.

Photo courtesy of Colombia Records

Thomas Neira
Managing Editor

Dominic Fike has released his debut album “What Could Possibly Go Wrong,” and while he has loads of potential as a musician, the album lacks creative risk and falls short of being impressionable.

Fike is a singer-songwriter and rapper from Florida known for his acoustic and genre-bending take on alternative pop music. He first gained attention for his single “3 Nights,” which garnered millions of online streams and resulted in a video collaboration with hip-hop collective Brockhampton.

Fike’s next big single would come the following year in the form of the track “Phone Numbers,” a collaboration with producer Kenny Beats. He gained more fame throughout the year by dropping more singles and through live performances, including a memorable performance at Tyler, the Creator’s Camp Flog Gnaw Carnival music festival.

Last month, on July 31, Fike released his long-awaited debut album “What Could Possibly Go Wrong,” a 34-minute long project made up of 14 relatively short tracks. While die-hard fans might enjoy the album, most listeners may find themselves disappointed by what Fike offers.

The album starts off with the brief but explosive track “Come Here,” where Fike provides passionate, scream-like vocals over a thundering electric guitar riff. Although “Come here” may only be over a minute long, it sets the bar high for the rest of the project.

Unfortunately, none of the remaining 13 tracks feature the same high octane energy as the opening track, but that doesn’t mean the album doesn’t have other bright moments.

The following track, “Double Negative (Skeleton Milkshake),” features some more great electric guitar instrumentation. Although the vocals may not be as loud or confrontational as the previous

song, the rather low and droning vocal harmonies do well to juxtapose the fast-paced guitar riffs.

The song “Cancel Me” is one of the highlights of the album. Fike opens up about how tired he is of the Los Angeles party lifestyle and wishes he would get “canceled” so he could return to a quiet, stress-free life with his family.

In the track, Fike makes references to Jimmy Kimmel, claiming the late night host wouldn’t want to meet him. He also references the Kanye West track “No More Parties in LA,” and even gives a slight diss to Brockhampton.

The highlights become more scarce after this point. “10x Stronger” features great vocal harmonies singing a simple yet engaging melody and concludes with grandiose orchestral instrumentation. This track struck me as one of the most interesting on the album, despite there only being one full sentence of lyrics in it.

I expected it to evolve into something more with the string instruments, but it seems to be used as more of a transition song. It’s a shame, considering the potential that could’ve come out of the shortest track on the entire album.

One of the best songs on the album is “Vampire.” The beat is groovy, the guitar riff is bouncy and Fike’s vocals are deep and “blank.” It brings to mind an early 2000s Rob Thomas track. The song also displays some of the most entertaining lyrics on the album.

“I only showed up to tell you / That everyone at this party is a vampire / This ain’t red wine,” Fike sings as a warning to the listener.

The song “Superstar Sh*t” is one of the more mellow tracks on the album, and the lo-fi sound of the track pays off. The simple beat behind the high-tuned vocals make the song feel like it belongs in a “chill lo-fi beats to study to” compilation on YouTube, and in this regard it stands out.

The following track “Politics and Violence” continues the lo-fi theme and

also features some brief orchestral instrumentation similar to “10x Stronger.” This song is one of the longer songs on the album, which makes sense as there is a slight beat change halfway through that keeps the listeners on their toes. This is another one of my favorite tracks and it’s surprising that this wasn’t picked as the lead single as opposed to the muddled and repetitive single “Chicken Tenders.”

Unfortunately, the album fails to impress considering the expectations Fike set for himself with his prior releases. Tracks like “Good Game” and “What’s For Dinner?” fail to set themselves apart as distinctive songs, and “Joe Blazey” has a beat switch but it doesn’t work nearly as well as the switch on “Politics

and Violence.”

It seems like Fike is holding himself back. The album feels like he’s trying to play it safe because he is unsure who he wants to be as an artist. Or perhaps he does know but he’s afraid of showing his vision.

No matter what, what Fike does prove on “What Could Possibly Go Wrong” is that he has loads of potential. Not every track on the project is a hit, but the ones that are hits are impactful and display what he is capable of as a musician.

The album is only the first of what are hopefully many projects to come from the up-and-coming singer. Fike has plenty of time to learn, grow and improve on future records.



Dominic Fike’s debut album “What Could Possibly Go Wrong” was released on July 31, 2020.

Photo courtesy of Colombia Records

The Montclarion

"In America, the President reigns for four years,
but Journalism governs forever." – Oscar Wilde

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This Week In NYC Metro Sports

WED 9/30

No games

THU 10/1

Denver Broncos at New York Jets
8:20 p.m.

FRI 10/2

No games

SAT 10/3

New York Red Bulls vs. Orlando City SC
4 p.m.

Toronto FC vs. Philadelphia Union
7:30 p.m.

Inter Miami CF vs. New York City FC
8 p.m.

SUN 10/4

New York Giants at Los Angeles Chargers
4:05 p.m.

Philadelphia Eagles at San Francisco 49ers
8:20 p.m.

MON 10/5

No games


TUE 10/6

New York City FC vs. D.C. United
7 p.m.

Sports

Major League Baseball Continues on Despite COVID-19 Threats

Baseball action returns despite global pandemic



Major League Baseball has faced a number of issues restarting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photo courtesy of sportslogos.net

Ryan Contino
Assistant Sports Editor

****These updates are as of August 27, 2020**

Just over a month since Opening Day 2020, Major League Baseball (MLB) has dealt with many issues due to the new coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The league was on the brink of shutting down the entire season due to multiple COVID-19 outbreaks on several teams.

COVID-19 cases spread throughout the Miami Marlins and St. Louis Cardinals organizations making both teams shutdown baseball activities for over a week.

This was the beginning of a scheduling nightmare that forced teams to switch up their schedules last minute. Scheduling conflicts have also left teams trying to squeeze in double headers and seven inning games to keep up with the MLB's demanding schedule.

The Toronto Blue Jays were denied access to have home games in Canada, leaving their season in limbo. Luckily, they have found a new home for the time being, playing their home

games at Sahlen Field, their Triple-A affiliate ballpark in Buffalo, New York.

Racial injustices have also played a factor in many teams cancelling games. Players have been very open about their thoughts on and off the field. They have taken to social media to show support in demanding justice and change, while also supporting other professional sports leagues such as the NBA and WNBA.

The Major League Baseball Players Association has used their platform to kneel and show solidarity with one another, igniting the change that needs to be seen in the United States.

The MLB's star players also released a video in support of the Black Lives Matter movement, ending with the phrase "One Team. One Dream. Be the change."

With all these factors playing into a reduced season, many baseball fans felt that the season might never finish and would be put on halt for certain circumstances.

Despite all those issues, there has definitely been many exciting moments in such a short time. The Los Angeles Dodgers sit atop the stand-

ings with a 29-10 record. The addition of right fielder Mookie Betts in the offseason to an already stacked lineup has increased their chances of capturing a title. The New York Yankees have been a powerhouse in the American League, even while dealing with injuries to right fielders Aaron Judge and Giancarlo Stanton.

Some bright spots have been the San Diego Padres (aka Slam Diego) behind young phenom shortstop Fernando Tatis Jr. He leads the majors in runs, RBI's and home runs. The Padres built a lineup throughout the past couple of years so that they could contend. With the Dodgers being in their division, they have a lot of work cut out for them throughout the rest of the season.

In the American League, the Oakland Athletics (A's) have quietly started with a 22-12 record. Consistent hitting and clutch comebacks have the A's on top of their division.

One team flying under the radar has been the Chicago White Sox. The franchise has built a team with a bunch of young talent. They won seven straight games, only trailing

the Minnesota Twins by two games for the division. They have the bulk of their lineup on contract for more than four years, keeping the future very bright for the team. The White Sox may be sleepers right now, but the next few seasons will prove they are legit contenders.

The MLB has tried to keep up with the constant changing of the COVID-19 pandemic while keeping players and coaches safe. Giving a platform to let players speak on injustices is the next step for the league and showing solidarity while caring for players' needs is what is most important.

The 2020 season has not been perfect by far, but the level of play has been top notch. New stars are emerging while teams that have been deemed bad in the past are finally coming around.

The shortened season has left little time for players to sit back and relax, as there is much to do on and off the diamond. Time will tell if the players can keep the intensity going into the playoffs throughout the fall, and if they can keep COVID-19 away from the league.

NYC Metro Sports Recap 9/20-24

Philadelphia Union: 4
Montreal Impact: 1

Philadelphia Union: 0
FC Cincinnati: 0

New York Red Bulls: 4
Inter Miami CF: 1

New York City FC: 0
Toronto FC: 1

New York Jets: 13
San Francisco 49ers: 31

New York Giants: 13
Chicago Bears: 17

Philadelphia Eagles: 19
Los Angeles Rams: 37

New York Mets: 0
Atlanta Braves: 7

New York Mets: 1
Tampa Bay Rays: 2

New York Mets: 5
Tampa Bay Rays: 2

New York Mets: 5
Tampa Bay Rays: 8

New York Yankees: 5
Toronto Blue Jays: 11

New York Yankees: 2
Boston Red Sox: 10

New York Yankees: 12
Toronto Blue Jays: 1

New York Yankees: 1
Toronto Blue Jays: 14

Philadelphia Phillies: 1
Washington Nationals: 5

Philadelphia Phillies: 3
Toronto Blue Jays: 6

Philadelphia Phillies: 1
Washington Nationals: 5

Philadelphia Phillies: 12
Washington Nationals: 3

Philadelphia Phillies: 7
Washington Nationals: 8



Meet the Montclair State University Esports Club



This club has proven sports can be played online too



The esports team, photographed last year, is looking to expand their club even more.

Photo courtesy of Christian Kohlmayer

Jesse Liptzin
Staff Writer

A new age of club sports at Montclair State University has arrived and the success has only just begun. In 2019, two esports fans decided to form a club that involved their passion of video games. The club started out as only two people and, in one year, grew into a club with 30 active people.

Christian Kohlmayer, a senior computer science major, and Jordan Lewis, a senior information technology major, are the founders of the club and quickly began to expand the team.

The two were roommates when they had the idea to start an esports team at Montclair State. Kohlmayer is the current president and Lewis is the vice president. Along with them, there are three other members on the editorial board to help run the whole program.

“When I decided to go to Montclair [State] I knew there was no club for esports, but I knew I wanted to start it up,” Kohlmayer said.

Kohlmayer has always been into video games and hopes to work in the industry of esports in the future. He is hoping to build a great environment for this type of activity at Montclair State, and a successful one at that.

Much like Kohlmayer, Lewis also has a passion for video games and loves to compete. In the club, he has been able to meet many people that share the same interest as him and hopes to one day find a career in the esports industry.

“Being a part of this club has definitely helped me develop my skills further in any game I play,” Lewis said. “Aside from gaming, I have met and

networked with so many people in the esports industry and I feel that also creates an opening for possible jobs in the future.”

Some recent success came at an Andbox tournament, where the team’s Call Of Duty duo placed fourth. They finished only behind big-time esports schools like New York University and Rutgers University.

The team also enjoys spending time together by hosting watch parties while big tournaments are in play. This is where the company Tespa will give the club giveaways, prizes and equipment in hopes of growing the sport at the college level.

The esports club at Montclair State also allows people who are interested in joining the club to be a fan instead of having to compete. This allows students to get a feel of what they are getting into while also getting the chance to chat with their fellow students who are playing in tournaments.

With the outbreak of the coronavirus, it seems that the safest sport for social distancing is in fact competitive gaming through esports. This is because there is no requirement for contact or requirement to even be in the same room as your competition. This allows the club to continue even during these unprecedented times.

“We are hoping to host online events from this point on,” Kohlmayer said. “We are thinking about doing a community game night or maybe starting a Minecraft server for all the teams sometime in the future to keep things interesting.”

Practicing fully online at the moment can be difficult to find camaraderie, yet Kohlmayer says that everyone gets along really well and practices

can be a lot of fun. There was hope to have a location to practice, but due to the pandemic and new safety rules implemented to follow, that plan has been halted.

Growing the program for students at Montclair State and for people that could attend in the future is a huge goal for this team. Growing an everlasting esports community at Montclair State could lead to something like a gaming center or a place meant for the association to gather and practice. This would be the team’s ultimate achievement.

“We want to create a community

where people know who we are,” Kohlmayer said. “We want the people to attend Montclair [State] in hopes of being apart of the esports program.”

“We really just want people to come out and give it a try,” Kohlmayer said. “Players on the team come from many different backgrounds and majors. [What is] most important is that they all have a passion for video games and gaming overall.”

One way to keep up with the program is by following the Montclair State Esports club on Instagram @montclair_esports and on Twitter @MSUCyberHawks.



Some of the esports club poses for a picture outside Madison Square Garden before the coronavirus pandemic.

Photo courtesy of Christian Kohlmayer



Montclair State Fall Sports Teams Remain Optimistic



Their season was postponed, but players continue to train



Midfielder/defender Keeley Winn looks to score during a shootout against Muhlenberg College in 2019.

Ben Caplan | The Montclarion

Corey Annan

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The pressure was mounting for the New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) to decide on whether to hold a fall sports season this year. Throughout the month of July, many conferences around the region had decided to postpone or cancel their fall season, and it was looking more and more likely that the NJAC would suffer the same fate.

Rumors began to spread toward the end of the month that the NJAC had cancelled their season, and the official announcement came on July 28. The NJAC Presidents Council and Board of Athletic Administrators came to the decision that no fall sports would be played in 2020 due to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, and that the conference will further explore the possibility of fall sports athletes competing in the spring of 2021.

According to Montclair State athletic director Robert Chesney, the restrictions put in place by the NCAA in terms of how fall sports could proceed moving forward played a key role in the conference's decision.

"Some of the COVID-19 mandates that came forward from the NCAA were quite restrictive," Chesney said. "It would've been tough for all NJAC schools to meet those requirements in order for us to have the season."

As for Montclair State, they seemed to already be prepared for the possibility of a fall sports season. In mid-July, the

university had already put in their own protocols for their athletic programs in the "Red Hawk Restart" plan, which included masks and social distancing mandates, daily screenings and guidelines for quarantining athletes.

This plan was released before the NJAC made their decision on fall sports. However, Chesney plans on sticking with the original plan.

"We are going to have student athletes practicing in the fall," Chesney said. "Even though they unfortunately won't be competing against other schools, we'll be following the protocols that we put in place [earlier]."

According to Chesney, the plan allows for flexibility, as it is still unknown how this pandemic will progress moving forward.

"We prepared the plan knowing that change is very possible and most likely will happen," Chesney said. "The most important thing that we talked about is being flexible, and being able to adapt, and our coaches understand that. So while we have a good plan and we plan to move forward, hopefully, things get better and not worse, but we are ready either way."

Practices will look much different for coaches and athletes moving forward. Coaches must have masks on while on the sidelines and players must have masks on if they are not participating in any physical activity. Teams will have smaller breakout groups for practices, splitting the field for it. Team meetings will also mostly be held online.

As for field hockey head coach Ellien O'Reilly, her pre-season training schedule will look much different than from years past. She is confident in the university's guidelines and approach.

"I don't think we'll have too many limitations," O'Reilly said. "The athletic administration has done a great job of giving us positive opportunities to train together. We have our first in-person practice on September 1st, and we'll practice for six weeks. We are just really excited to have the opportunity to be back out on the field together."

While the news of the season being postponed was certainly upsetting for everyone, O'Reilly and her team are looking on the bright side.

"The news was disappointing, especially for our seniors since this was their expected senior season," O'Reilly said. "We don't necessarily know what the future holds for them although we hope to see them next year. But also at the same time we are thankful and grateful to have the opportunity to practice together in the fall."

The men's soccer team in particular was looking forward to a grand 2020 season. The team had just made a deep run in the NCAA Tournament last season and was optimistic about how the upcoming fall season would play out.

Oscar Sanchez, star forward for the men's soccer team, shared his disappointment with the decision.

"Our initial reaction [as a team] was sadness," Sanchez said. "It was a little frustrat-

ing because it ruined not only our spring semester, it ruined summer and now the entire season. Last year, we left with a little bit of an edge cause we were seconds away from going to a Final Four in the NCAA Tournament. We were all prepared and ready to go hard this season, but now we realize it isn't in our hands."

Sanchez realizes that even if there is a spring season, it may not include a whole lot of, if any, postseason play. He believes that the fall training will be extremely pivotal to the success of the team.

"To be honest, we are very focused on training on our own until the guidelines get better and things get easier, so we can take advantage of the fall training to get better mentally and physically," Sanchez said. "We don't know if there will be an NCAA Championship or an NJAC Championship and it's going to be weird but we are going to be focused on being more ready and prepared than anyone else."

One concern that many people are asking about is the safety of players while practicing and/or competing, as social distancing and mask wearing cannot really be achieved while in live action.

While Sanchez is nervous about the threat of COVID-19, he plans on continuing to play the sport he loves with caution.

"The COVID-19 pandemic in general is nerve-racking," Sanchez said. "But as athletes, if you love your sport, you're gonna do whatever you can [to play it]. I'm going to be as cautious as possible, I know the [university's] guidelines are as

cautious as possible, so I'm not really nervous because I want to get back to playing. I will take as many cautionary steps as I need to take to make sure that I'm healthy and ready to go."

There are still so many unanswered questions in regards to how fall sports would look if it were to be played in the spring. It is still unclear if fall sports teams will follow a traditional schedule, as it seems teams will be preparing to play mostly in-conference games at the very least.

Another big question is how teams will be able to share Sprague Field. There could potentially be four teams actively using the field on a regular basis, assuming that spring sports teams also have their seasons.

Everything is currently in the works and still being tweaked, according to Chesney. While he understands the circumstances are tough for these fall sports teams, he also believes that eventually we will have sports back on campus. He even thinks there are some positives to take out of all of this.

"It's been a difficult circumstance not only in the athletic world but everywhere, there's people out there that are dealing with more dire circumstances than we are," Chesney said. "We are keeping everything [in] perspective, and we understand that we are going to have sports back soon. Teams are going to have the chance to do some different things in fall than what they have done in the past, and it's going to be a teaching and learning experience for everyone, and we are all looking forward to that."